

## Message Text

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51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W  
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O 271847Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8736

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03069

EXDIS

FOR BUELL (EUR/NE)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: CARDIFF - BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON GEORGE

THOMAS: POINTS FOR SECRETARY'S REPLY TO TOAST

1. GEORGE THOMAS, WHO WILL SHARE HONORS WITH FONSECA  
CALLAGHAN AT CARDIFF, IS CURRENTLY DEPUTY SPEAKER OF THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS. HE WAS BORN IN WALES AND  
STUDIED THERE UNTIL HE WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH-  
AMPTON. HE TAUGHT SCHOOL UNTIL HE ENTERED PARLIAMENT AS  
A LABOR MEMBER IN 1945 FROM CARDIFF.

THOMAS HAS SERVED IN THE CABINET AS PARLIAMENTARY  
UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE IN THE HOME OFFICE, MINISTER OF  
STATE FOR WALES AND MINISTER OF STATE, COMMONWEALTH  
OFFICE. THOMAS IS AN OUTSPOKEN OPPONENT OF THE WELSH  
NATIONALIST MOVEMENT. HE OWES HIS RISE IN THE LABOR  
PARTY TO HIS FAITHFUL AND UNCRITICAL SUPPORT OF PRIME  
MINISTER WILSON RATHER THAN TO HIS ABILITY. THOMAS IS A  
BACHELOR, A TEETOTALER AND A PROMINENT METHODIST LAY  
PREACHER. HE IS FRIENDLY AND DOES HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR.

2. FOLLOWING ARE A FEW WELSH POINTS FOR REPLY SECRETARY  
IS EXPECTED TO MAKE TO LORD MAYOR'S TOAST:

(A) THE ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA TELLS ME  
THAT THE WELSH ARE FOND OF TALKING AND SINGING. I HAD  
THOUGHT OF TRYING TO LEARN A FEW WORDS OF GREETING IN  
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WELSH BEFORE COMING TO CARDIFF, BUT I DECIDED YOU MIGHT

FIND IT DIFFICULT ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND MY TRANS-ATLANTIC  
ENGLISH. AS FOR SINGING, I AM AMONG EXPERTS AND I'LL  
LEAVE THAT TO GEORGE THOMAS.

(B) I AM ALSO TOLD THAT BEYOND TALKING AND  
SINGING, THE WELSH SPEND A GOOD DEAL OF TIME PLAYING AND  
WATCHING RUGBY. BUT I BELIEVE THAT IS MUCH TOO SERIOUS  
A SUBJECT TO BE TREATED BY A FOREIGNER.

(C) FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE I CAN PARTICULARLY  
APPRECIATE THE GREAT HONOR THAT JIM CALLAGHAN MUST FEEL  
TODAY, SINCE I KNOW THAT HE IS AN IMMIGRANT TO WALES,  
HAVING COME UP TO CARDIFF ABOUT 1945.

SPIERS

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